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later:	Mr. ALPMAN (Vice-Chairman)	(Turkey)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 47 TO 65 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. RASAPUTRAM (Sri Lanka): At the outset, Sir, let me congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Your diplomatic skills and vast experience give us the assurance that you will guide the deliberations of the Committee to a successful outcome at this time of progress for international peace and security. The congratulations of the Sri Lanka delegation go also to the other officers of the Committee. Let me also pay a tribute to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Akashi, and to the Committee's Secretary, Mr. Kherabi, for their work in the field of disarmament. In addition, I should like to pledge our fullest support and cooperation in all your work in this Committee.

Today, events are overtaking us so rapidly that we have to study their implications for the establishment of peace and security in the world. The events of last year, as well as those of this year, have left an indelible mark in the annals of political history. The recent positive developments have shown great promise in terms of creative thinking and in the unity of resolve to achieve a stable international political order. The success of the diplomatic efforts of the United Nations to alleviate regional conflicts is still fresh in our minds and encourages us to narrow our differences and achieve our common objective.

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

The significant changes that are taking place in Eastern Europe and in developing countries will have their repercussions through political, social and economic factors such as to cause international concerns. The promising developments observed so far must not be overshadowed by negative forces that would retard the progress achieved in the various fields of disarmament. We are all committed to strict adherence to the framework of a system that ensures peace, prosperity and the protection of human values, as called for by the United Nations Charter.

In this context it is gratifying to note that the United Nations has played an effective role in the resolution of conflicts and in laying a firm foundation for an international disarmament strategy, which will have to be implemented on a collective basis with shared responsibility. The Gulf crisis has indicated that global security depends not on the stockpile of arms but on a complex of political and socio-economic factors. That partnership is essential for world security was demonstrated by the Gulf war. In an interdependent world all nations will have to respect one another and work as partners to remove the elements that lead to instability.

Today we are puzzled by the rapid changes that are taking place in every sphere of activity. In such a situation our aim should be to consolidate the gains made so far and strengthen the international involvement in a constructive manner so as to withstand any unforeseeable reversals. There is still inertia and inactivity, motivated by short-term political considerations and the avoidance of concerted efforts to arrive at acceptable solutions. But within a changing environment the developed countries are expected to provide imaginative leadership, backed by political will, so as not to allow a retreat from multilateralism. The web of social, political and economic connections

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makes imperative, for the efficient functioning of the new world order, the participation of developing countries as equal partners.

We are heartened by the fact that there is a new vision and a new trend towards globalization and the search for solutions to regional conflicts through the United Nations. Democratization of the decision-making process based on expanded cooperation and mutual understanding and respect will pave the way for global well-being and common security within the context of interdependence among sovereign States. Sri Lanka, with well-entrenched democratic traditions, pledges its full support and cooperation in working towards global security and stability through the well-accepted principles of democratic discussions and negotiations. When the going is good we must seize the favourable opportunities and build on them rather than allowing slippages to occur, even inadvertently.

The nuclear issues and the stockpiling of such weapons even though a nuclear war is non-viable tend to haunt us. The acquisition by an increasing number of States of technical capability for the production of nuclear weapons causes us grave concern. The nuclear arms race, both in its qualitative aspect and on the quantitative side, cannot be said to be over, and therefore action must be taken to end that competition. The issue of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament has to be given highest priority, with a view to ending the testing and building up of nuclear weapons. Though some progress has been made in the reduction of nuclear arsenals, particularly through the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), more and determined efforts are required to produce acceptable and satisfying results.

We are encouraged by the negotiations and agreements reached between the United States and the Soviet Union on the reduction of strategic arms. The

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most recent United States action, as well as the Soviet reaction thereto, with regard to the elimination of short-range nuclear weapons and the removal of nuclear missiles from warships will pave the way for a positive response from all nuclear-power States to the effect that they will work towards the desired objective of a nuclear-free world. However, in the case of nuclear testing for improving the quality of nuclear weapons, only limited expectations are offered by the conclusions reached by the United States and the Soviet Union relating to the peaceful nuclear explosion Treaty and the threshold test-ban Treaty. The nuclear-weapon-test ban has been on the agenda of this Committee for a long period, and the General Assembly has repeatedly urged all States to discontinue all test explosions of nuclear weapons. We are firmly convinced that a comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon tests is a matter of the highest priority. The Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban has done some substantive work, but the expectations remained low even from the very start, and the problems could not be fully overcome even at the end. The re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee by the Conference on Disarmament next year will represent a forward-looking approach in the spirit of compromise and feasibility and will take us on the path to greater progress.

To achieve success in our efforts we must be aware that current events fully endorse the view that the concept of deterrence has lost its credibility and relevance and that we must avoid being doctrinaire in our assertions and holding beliefs which have no relevance to reality.

There can always be differences of opinion on the methods of arriving at a nuclear-test ban, but all are agreed that a nuclear-test ban is desirable to prevent the acquisition of nuclear capabilities by countries. A gradual approach to this issue could create new loopholes and more problems. The

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issues relating to a comprehensive test ban must necessarily be all-inclusive, with regard to verification and compliance and the final culmination of a treaty. The Conference to amend the partial test-ban Treaty opened the door for future discussions and negotiations; but the political questions that loom large cannot be settled unless they are carefully negotiated and purposefully conducted through the creation of awareness among the people, that is, through well-informed public opinion.

Recently a very successful seminar was held in Vienna on confidence-building measures in regard to all military affairs. We have to take urgent steps to intensify our efforts by strengthening confidence-building activities so as to prevent misunderstanding and miscalculations that might lead to irreversible military confrontation. This balance of armaments has to be achieved at the lowest possible level. If information on military capabilities and predictability and openness in military affairs are available, that will provide the opportunity to reduce military confrontation, thereby achieving a realistic reduction in military budgets. The Stockholm Document on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament and the views expressed at the Vienna Seminar have encouraged nations to seek greater openness in regard to military spending, thus increasing the elements of trust between States.

The promotion of the cause of military openness will result in a drastic reduction in military budgets. Those trillions of dollars that are used to bolster defence, sometimes against an imaginary enemy, could well be utilized to release sufficient funds for the cause of global development. We are aware that the heavy budget deficits of large countries have caused imbalances in the world economic situation. They are financed from the savings of other

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countries, thus reducing the resources available to these countries to step up their production process. Armament expenditures have crossed the boundary of reasonable sufficiency. In the developing countries armament expenditures have been kept up to fight terrorism and to provide security for the large bulk of the population. Poverty is the root cause of tension. The eradication of poverty, therefore, has to be given top priority by the international community, on the basis of shared responsibility, to enable the developing countries to get out of the poverty trap. Poverty-alleviation programmes will help the productive use of resources to enhance development capacity so that resources are not wasted on unnecessary defence expenditures. There is no doubt that reduced levels of military spending in developing countries would enable them to finance their programmes for sustainable development and enhance their standing as regards receiving increased foreign savings. Increased foreign savings to meet the financial needs for the development of developing countries will have to be considered in the context of demands made by Eastern Europe, the rehabilitation of countries affected by the Gulf crisis and the reduction of unbearable debt burdens. The so-called peace dividend resulting from the reduction of military expenditures can satisfy all these demands and even more, in addition to the ongoing process of the flow of resources. All estimates indicate that all the competing demands can be met by a reduction of military expenditures by all countries after money is released to meet the budgetary imbalances within those countries. Disarmament and development are so intertwined that any artificial attempt to separate them will only perpetuate the disparities and cause regional and subregional tension and insecurity, the result mainly of lack of development.

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Acquisition of weapons by States has been more for security reasons than for intended aggression. This seems to follow the old adage: if you want peace, prepare for war. There are, no doubt, threats against security, and the price of peace is therefore eternal vigilance. It is not by actions on the part of one individual State or group of States that peace can be secured in the world. Peace and security will have to be constructed and strengthened on the basis of collective action in political choice and well-declared intentions to achieve consensus. Strict adherence to the United Nations Charter is basic to the prevention of a threat to security. However, when some countries develop a complex of military inferiority, their actions tend to heighten the tensions against, and threat to, peace.

The Gulf War has taught us many important lessons. One relates to the unbridled transfer of arms, which by itself is a highly disturbing phenomenon. Arms transfers, particularly to regions of conflict and to terrorist groups, have caused immense human suffering in uprooting people and in carrying out an orgy of self-destruction among nations. We have always supported action by the United Nations in the supervision of arms transfers. We are aware that some of the developing countries can ill afford the build-up of military arsenals and capabilities. But the arms manufacturers add to their problems by actively promoting such sales. More and more small nations are getting embroiled in serious conflicts as a result of free arms transfers to terrorist groups, and are thereby denied the ability to progress economically, socially and politically. The draft resolutions submitted to the First Committee in the past calling for a halt to these destructive transfers have not found adequate support for concrete action. Unrestrained arms transfers to various terrorist groups, particularly subnational terrorist

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elements financed by drug trafficking and other illegal means, where the profit motive rather than the security of nations had been the driving force, have added to the existing socio-economic problems of developing countries. Their development incentives and capital formation have been destroyed by irregular groups that have illegally acquired arms. In certain instances, these terrorist groups have developed international links, to the detriment of regional and subregional security and peace.

It is important that the United Nations should supervise both the production and the transfer of arms. The transparency that is demanded will enhance confidence-building measures in the field of disarmament. The study under the auspices of the United Nations on international arms transfers will provide the basis for an international understanding in the context of multilateral negotiations to arrive at a consensus about the urgent need for the prevention of an arms race. The search for a solution remains elusive as long as this question is not moulded into the urgently needed priority programmes of the United Nations. We have to take concrete action in the time-bound programme, with unity of resolve, so that the United Nations can remain vigilant and safeguard security for the promotion of human welfare.

Towards this end, as an international measure designed to curb transfers of conventional armaments, Sri Lanka supports a universal and non-discriminatory United Nations register of conventional arms transfers in all their aspects. In this context, Sri Lanka is encouraged by the Secretary-General's statement that:

> "If applied fairly to, and worked out in concert by, arms suppliers and recipients alike, a register would foster a climate that is conducive to voluntary restraint and more responsible behaviour." (A/46/1, p. 12)

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

As a State party to both the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the biological weapons Convention of 1972, Sri Lanka notes with satisfaction that the recently concluded Third Review Conference of the Parties to the biological weapons Convention was able to produce a progressive final declaration, which will no doubt strengthen the credibility of the Convention.

Motivated by the recent global developments, the States parties, in the course of their review exercise, emphatically reflected upon the vital need to pursue concerted and constructive international measures to eliminate the threat of the use of all weapons of mass destruction in general, and of biological and toxin weapons in particular, as well as the threat of their proliferation, both vertical and horizontal.

In the Final Declaration, the States parties reaffirmed their belief that universal adherence to the Convention would enhance international peace and security. One of the major achievements of the Conference is the agreement by the States partics for further improvement and expansion of the existing confidence-building measures on the basis of multilateral cooperation. The decision of the States parties to set up an ad hoc group of governmental experts to identify and examine the potential verification measures from a scientific and technical standpoint is another significant outcome of the Conference towards the effective implementation and reinforcement of the Convention. On the whole, the solemn Declaration, as well as the operative elements of the Final Document of the Conference, provides several new initiatives, including multilateral mechanisms for implementing the provisions of the biological weapons Convention. What is imperative now is the political will of the States parties and accession to the Convention by the States non-parties without delay.

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

We are optimistic that negotiations on the chemical weapons convention will be completed by the end of 1992. The bulk of the "technical infrastructure" of the convention has been established and the remaining issues impinge on political decisions where the spirit of compromise will remain uppermost. The direction of the movement towards an agreement enhances our optimism, particularly after the statement by the President of the United States announcing the most progressive steps towards facilitating a consensus on the main prohibition of the convention, covering the entire chemical weapons cycle, including the unconditional destruction of chemical-weapon stocks within a specified time-frame.

There is no disagreement as regards the need to maintain universality as the ultimate objective in the implementation of the convention. The need to impose an unconditional and comprehensive ban on the entire chemical weapons cycle requires the maintenance of the internal consistency of the convention in maintaining its non-discriminatory and multilateral character.

The chemical weapons convention will be a unique instrument in terms of both its intrusiveness and its coverage of civilian industrial activity. In this respect, every care should be taken not to place heavy burdens of a discriminatory nature on the smaller countries under the verification regime. We are fully aware that verification envisages the build-up of a broad-based information system supplied by the countries themselves. Evidently a large majority of the potential States parties would be countries which have never had chemical weapons nor would they ever have the intention of acquiring them. The verification burden of the convention can fall heavily on them if the basic requirements impose heavy financial costs and resource constraints.

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

It has been argued, particularly by Argentina, that the verification regime should remain commercially neutral and the need to avoid a dual regime for civil chemical trade once the convention comes into force. Verification measures and their implementation through the legal channels, in respect of both national and international verification and the economic implications of possible dual regimes, can push the smaller countries into a position in which they have to legislate for every eventuality. The importance of avoiding situations by which the convention makes it obligatory to incur heavy financial burdens disproportionate to the size of the problem need hardly be stressed.

We are confident that the chemical weapons Convention will be a reality very soon. We are aware that the threat of the use of chemical weapons and the perceptions relating to mass destruction arising from their possible use neither deterred nor influenced the outcome of the Gulf War. This is an eye-opener for all of us, so we can focus our attention on other priority areas where weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, pose a threat to survival. We have to seize this opportunity to move away from inertia and to take an active interest in eliminating the entire class of weapons of mass destruction.

Sri Lanka remains committed to the conclusion of the convention at the earliest possible date. My Government is actively considering becoming an original signatory to the convention when it is ready for signature upon its conclusion.

In matters relating to outer space we still have a long way to go. Regrettably, the ad hoc committee on outer space has no negotiating mandate.

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

Outer space, as a common heritage of mankind, has to be protected and utilized for the benefit of all.

Multilateral cooperation is not only essential but also indispensable for that purpose. The peaceful use of outer space has brought the world together and made it a global village. Rapid advancement of science and technology has not only improved the quality of life on this planet but has also led to the development of new kinds of arms. This has resulted in a greater degree of frustration among a majority of States as the expectations for progress in the prevention of an arms race in outer space have become more and more elusive. Sri Lanka, in collaboration with Egypt and Venezuela, has sponsored a draft resolution aimed at preventing an extension of the arms race to outer space. Last year we made some progress in that we were able to submit one draft resolution on outer space as a result of constructive and productive consultations and negotiations with other groups.

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

The Ad Hoc Committee in 1991 made useful progress as a result of the efforts made by Ambassador Moritan of Argentina. We note that the conclusions adopted by consensus included improved elements. But the international community has not been able to take forward-looking measures to move towards the goal of achieving an international convention to prevent the arms race being extended to outer space. Sri Lanka will continue to co-operate fully with other delegations, in particular with Egypt and Venezuela, in submitting to the First Committee a resolution relating the position taken last year. We hope that all other delegations will support a single resolution so that we can work towards our common goal by cutting down the foliage that blocks our vision. There is lot of work to be done, both in New York and in Geneva, both in confidence-building measures and in the achievement of greater transparency and openness in the area covered by outer space. We believe that progress can be achieved, both bilaterally and multilaterally, by focusing on elements of common interest and on those that require urgent action. The Sri Lanka delegation will actively collaborate with other delegations in developing the work done so far so as to make it more useful in the future.

Finally, we are happy to note that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace has completed its work. It now remains for the Ad Hoc Committee to harmonize views on certain sections of the preparatory work prior to the holding of the Conference in Colombo in 1993. In the light of the changed and improved world situation there is an inexorable need for all Members to redouble their interest and efforts in making this Conference a success. For the establishment of a peace zone in the Indian Ocean region, it is essential that the international community without any reservations convene the Colombo Conference to give added impetus to disarmament initiatives. We

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urge the participation and cooperation of the permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean in this endeavour for the sake of peace, security and development. Sri Lanka will sponsor a draft resolution in this regard. We are hopeful that this draft resolution will enjoy the full support of this Committee.

Mr. KARHILO (Finland): It is a great pleasure for me, Sir, to join previous speakers in welcoming very warmly your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. The delegation of Finland is convinced that under your stewardship the Committee will deal with its important agenda productively and expeditiously.

I take this opportunity also to record our appreciation for Under-Secretary-General Akashi and his achievements. As described in his statement to the Committee yesterday, the Department for Disarmament Affairs is playing an increasingly important role in advancing our common cause - disarmament. The enhanced role of the Department is in no small measure due to Mr. Akashi's energetic and skilful leadership.

There is an instructive story by Dr. Seuss of a North-going Zax and a South-going Zax who met in the prairie of Prax. The two Zaxes got into a long and stubborn argument over who should give way. In the end, neither budged and the world passed them by.

I am afraid that, in the past, multilateral discussions have sometimes resembled the dialogue of the two Zaxes. To the detriment of us all, North and South.

Today, the world is different. Real disarmament is taking place. More disarmament is in the offing. The military postures of yesteryear are

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

cracking. Dangers are turning into risks. To the benefit of us all, North and South.

Multilateral disarmament debate must reflect the vastness of change, the new paradigm. The alternative is the fate of the two Zaxes, that is, irrelevance.

Finland welcomes the historic initiative by President Bush on nuclear disarmament. Finland welcomes the equally historic response by President Gorbachev to his initiative. The two largest nuclear arsenals will be reduced and reorganized, to better suit a world where the United States and the Soviet Union are no longer adversaries but countries in search of cooperation. The cold war is truly over.

The removal of all short-range land-based nuclear forces from Europe will enhance Europe's security. In our view, these steps are very much in keeping with the cooperative security structures now emerging in Europe.

Major reductions in the Soviet Union's tactical nuclear weapons as well as the creation of a single command for its strategic nuclear forces will help strengthen international confidence in that Soviet nuclear forces will remain in responsible hands even under conditions of widespread turbulence.

We welcome the assurances by Ukraine that nuclear weapons at present deployed in its territory will be eliminated and that Ukraine does not seek to possess any nuclear weapons of its own.

Finland has long expressed concern over the deployment in Arctic waters of sea-based tactical nuclear weapons as well as their conventional counterparts, especially low-flying cruise missiles. While not directed at Finland, geography makes it so that, in a confrontation, such weapons could threaten Finnish security. Finland has therefore a particular reason to

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

welcome the reciprocal steps to reduce nuclear deployment in our immediate vicinity. They should be followed by steps towards conventional naval disarmament.

We would feel even more secure if nuclear submarine patrols in Arctic waters were reduced. A Chernobyl at sea would have devastating consequences.

The unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests likewise has particular significance for Finland. The Novaya Zemlya testing site, a mere thousand kilometres from our borders, will remain silent for at least a year. We continue to urge that it remain silent for ever. Finland hopes that the moratorium will spur progress towards a comprehensive and verifiable nuclear-test ban world-wide.

Neither weapons of mass destruction nor conventional arms are any longer issues dominated by threat perceptions in the East-West context. Indeed, there is no East-West context any more. That is no cause for complacency, however.

There are still far too many nuclear weapons in the world. In our view, stability and deterrence can be secured at much lower levels of strategic nuclear weapons. We applaud START and hope for its early ratification. We also welcome Soviet willingness to go below START levels. START should be the beginning of reductions, not the end.

At the same time, the potential risk to international peace and security posed by other arsenals than the traditional ones is growing. That is no longer an opinion but a fact. Iraq's clandestine pursuit of nuclear weapons in brazen contravention of its treaty obligations has been documented by the United Nations Special Commission. And Iraq may not be the only one. Only the one that got caught.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

In our view, the growing multipolarity of nuclear and other lethal risks requires multiple, mutually supportive approaches. Non-proliferation, outright prohibition and increased transparency are such approaches.

First, nuclear non-proliferation efforts must be pursued with vigour. Secondly, a total ban on chemical weapons must be concluded as an urgent priority and efforts to strengthen the biological weapons Convention must continue. Thirdly, conventional weapons must be accorded much more attention than hitherto.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the centre-piece of efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. We welcome the accession of new parties to the Treaty this year. The accession of South Africa, in particular, should help realize the denuclearization of Africa that we, among others, have long supported.

Finland welcomes the decisions by China and France to join the Treaty in principle. With their accession, which we hope will take place soon, all five nuclear-weapon States will be parties. We also welcome the interest that Argentina, Brazil and Chile have shown in concluding safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The international non-proliferation regime can only profit thereby.

Finland calls on those few States that still remain outside the NPT to join as soon as possible. We welcome the accession of Lithuania and trust that our other two Baltic neighbours will do the same. Universality of membership and early agreement on its extension would do much to strengthen the Treaty.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

The experience with Iraq shows that signing on the dotted line is not enough, however, The international community needs the means to watch more effectively over the implementation of non-proliferation commitments. The IAEA has a key role to play in this respect. In Finland's view, the Agency should be provided with an effective on-site inspection capability. The credibility of present and future safeguards agreements is at stake.

Conclusion of a safeguards agreement with the IAEA is a legal requirement under the NPT. It is also an unconditional requirement. Finland hopes that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, an NPT party since 1985, will comply in good faith with its legal obligation without any more delay.

Non-proliferation efforts must be complemented by appropriate export controls and international coordination of national measures. We have maintained national export controls for a long time. Just a few days ago, Finland applied for membership in the Missile Technology Control Regime. We have also done so with regard to the Australia Group which works to prevent chemical weapons proliferation.

Chemical weapons negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament have gathered momentum since May. Important issues remain but they are now being addressed with determination. Finland is confident that an effectively verifiable chemical weapons Convention will soon become a reality.

For its part, Finland will continue to work towards that end by pursuing Convention-related verification research and making the results available to the Conference on Disarmament. We will also continue to train analysts from developing countries in verification methods and techniques necessary for the effective implementation of the Convention once it is in place.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

The Third Review Conference of the biological weapons Convention was a success. It strengthened the Convention. Work on verification was at long last initiated. Confidence-building measures were improved and expanded. We are particularly pleased that the Review Conference endorsed our initiative for the declaration of vaccine production facilities as one of the three new confidence-building measures.

Europe, which used to be castigated as the continent with the heaviest concentration of arms, is rapidly shedding its notoriety. The Agreement on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, unilateral pullbacks and confidence- and security-building measures are shaping a new Europe.

The regional approach to conventional disarmament works. We believe that the European experience is relevant to concerns in other regions. For example, confidence-building measures, which are sometimes derided as marginal compared to disarmament proper, have paved the way for actual disarmament. There should be no reason why political will for negotiated confidence-building measures cannot be summoned in other regions when it could be summoned in Europe - then bitterly divided into two antagonistic blocs.

Globally, at the United Nations, Member States are only beginning to deal with the issue of conventional weapons. In the first place, there is a clear need for States as well as their citizens to know more of what is going on in this area, particularly with regard to the arms trade. Finland therefore welcomed the initiative for a study on ways and means of promoting transparency in international transfers of conventional arms and provided an expert to participate in its preparation.

Finland strongly supports the key recommendation of the study - the establishment of a universal and non-disciminatory register of international

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

arms transfers under United Nations management. In our view, the decision to set up the register should be made by this session of the General Assembly.

The United Nations has a large role to play in meeting the challenges of the new era of international disarmament efforts. It will continue to provide the most representative forum for debating and negotiating disarmament issues of global import. We believe the United Nations will increasingly serve its Members by performing specific tasks in the field of disarmament. The United Nations Special Commission, management of confidence-building measures under the biological weapons Convention, as well as the prospective register of conventional arms transfers are all harbingers, albeit very different, of a new trend.

This emerging trend has Finland's full and active support.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): Let me begin by expressing my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, presiding over our deliberations. We are confident that, under your guidance, our deliberations will achieve substantive progress. I should also like to extend our felicitations to the other members of the Bureau on their election.

This year's session of the First Committee has been convened against the backdrop of dramatic changes in the political and economic constellations of the world, and at a time when relations among nations in many regions are evolving in ways that could not have been envisioned a few years ago. We have entered the post-cold-war period and the contours of a new world order are beginning to emerge. We have taken a few steps away from the nuclear abyss. The long-overdue process of nuclear disarmament is finally under way. Traditional concepts of military threat, national security and defence spending have undergone fundamental changes. As a result, new perceptions and revised policies have emerged, bringing fresh impetus to the long-dormant disarmament scene.

We all welcomed the recent progress in arms limitation and disarmament. The entry into force of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - has been a noteworthy achievement. The signing of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe is yet another step forward towards ensuring the security and stability of Europe. The Amendment Conference on the partial test-ban Treaty held last January was the first multilateral negotiating forum on a nuclear-arms treaty in which all countries, nuclear and non-nuclear alike, participated in the efforts to attain the commonly agreed objective of a complete cessation of nuclear testing. The strategic arms agreement reached between the United States and the Soviet Union in September has mandated a substantial reduction of their nuclear forces.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

My delegation is particularly gratified by the unilateral and sweeping offer made by President Bush to eliminate tactical nuclear weapons on land and at sea in Europe and in Asia and to negotiate deep reductions in intercontinental ballistic missiles and other long-range nuclear weapons. Likewise, we commend the reciprocal offer by President Gorbachev to seek even deeper reductions in nuclear forces. Taken together, these historic initiatives have not only confirmed the credibility of unilateral measures but also offer unprecedented opportunities to attain the universally shared vision of a nuclear-free world. Meanwhile, the military doctrines and postures of the major Powers are being reviewed in the context of the new and emerging global realities.

We are also gratified to note that France and China have now signified their readiness to become signatories to the non-proliferation Treaty, thus eliminating one of its major shortcomings. In Latin America, the agreement reached last July between Argentina and Brazil on the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the Mendoza commitment undertaken by them, as well as the renunciation by Chile and Uruguay of chemical and bacteriological weapons, represent significant milestones in non-proliferation efforts.

However, in assessing the implications of the post-cold-war period for disarmament, we are also acutely aware of the sobering reality of how little progress has been made and how marginally we have moved in arms limitation. Nuclear arsenals of immense destructive power continue to cast their shadows across the globe. Compounding the situation is the growing vulnerability of command, control and communications systems and the disquieting prospect of the unauthorized launching of these weapons, especially during times of national crises and turmoil.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

Despite the significant improvement in the global political and security climate, the arms race, especially in its qualitative aspects, has assumed a momentum of its own, propelling itself onward by feeding on the apprehension it causes and the self-perpetuating institutions that it has created. Meanwhile, global military expenditures have not been appreciably reduced and the burgeoning trade in arms continues to soar, with a severe impact on the global economy.

Thus, my delegation has long been convinced that a more comprehensive strategy is needed to reverse the arms race and to accelerate the process of armament reduction and disarmament. In this context, it should be recognized that the piecemeal efforts of the past have proven insufficient, particularly with regard to nuclear armaments. What is needed at this juncture is a new, integrated approach encompassing the entire range of efforts in arms reduction and disarmament that would serve as a common platform for negotiations in the relevant forums on the various aspects of disarmament in both their quantitative and their qualitative dimensions.

The immediate objective should be the initiation of urgent negotiations on reversing the arms race in all its aspects and on launching a process of genuine disarmament. Within this approach, all measures with regard to arms limitation and reduction, the elimination of stockpiles and dismantling of military installations, and the reduction of armed forces should be enumerated and presented separately for each category of weapons and weapons systems. While priority must necessarily be accorded to nuclear disarmament, we should also pursue conventional disarmament measures. Progress in implementation should be gauged, inter alia, by linking reductions in military expenditures to cuts in specific weapons systems as well as research and development.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

The main responsibility for initiating this approach rests with the nuclear Powers, which must first agree to an immediate freeze on the production and development of nuclear weapons and fissionable materials. This should be followed by sustained bilateral, regional and multilateral discussions and negotiations on specific measures of disarmament. Throughout the process it is essential to devise appropriate methods and procedures which are non-discriminatory and will ensure the undiminished security of all States at progressively lower levels of armaments. The participation and political will of the nuclear Powers and other militarily significant States would be indispensable for the effective implementation of any such initiatives. The conscious pursuit of these objectives is now feasible, since the suspicion and mistrust that fueled the arms race for so long have been considerably reduced.

Rapid and fundamental changes continue to transform the global landscape. There has been a significant improvement in East-West relations as well as in the global political and security climate. Concurrently, intensified efforts are under way to resolve longstanding conflict situations. The opportunities presented by these momentous developments should be seized by concerted endeavours to accelerate progress on the priority issues of disarmament.

It is to be recalled that, for over three decades, the international community's preoccupation with the qualitative aspects of the arms race was fully reflected in the General Assembly's adoption of more than 70 resolutions on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. It has remained a priority objective and has been pursued more consistently and for a longer period of time than any other disarmament issue. However, the nuclear Powers have continued to conduct weapon tests that have not ceased to this day.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

Consequently, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of warheads, delivery capabilities have become more sophisticated, and research and development promise ever more advanced nuclear weapons systems even while their numbers are being reduced. Hence, those who hoped for militarily significant cuts or even a slow-down in the introduction of new and more dangerous technologies have little ground for optimism.

This regrettable lack of progress is due primarily to the failure on the part of the two depositary Governments for the partial test-ban Treaty to fulfill their solemn obligations undertaken in existing treaties and other declarations. The non-nuclear States are therefore concerned that weapons of the future will be more potent and less verifiable, undermine the validity of existing agreements, and render the possibility of future accords increasingly difficult.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

More ominously, their introduction into new areas will have far-reaching ramifications for global security. Hence, the cessation of nuclear-weapons testing constitutes an essential step to prevent the emergence of a new generation of weapons systems, to stem horizontal and vertical proliferation and to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Indeed, for an overwhelming majority of States, a comprehensive test ban constitutes the litmus test of a demonstrable commitment to pursue nuclear disarmament.

My delegation believes that the momentum generated by the conclusion of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty, and the Treaties on conventional forces in Europe and strategic arms limitation, as well as the heightened expectations created by recent pronouncements of dramatic reductions in nuclear arsenals, offer a propitious atmosphere in which to terminate the frantic search for futuristic technology and for ever-more-deadly weapons. That paramount objective can be achieved by the genuine participation of all nuclear Powers in the ongoing processes of the Amendment Conference to convert the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Beyond the amendment, moreover, it is essential to move forward with all deliberate speed on other critical issues within an overarching vision of a collective approach that should be the rule rather than the exception.

Indonesia remains committed to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. We are pleased to note the encouraging progress made in the negotiations on chemical weapons, which we hope will lead to the expeditious conclusion of a convention. The agreement on the inclusion of a provision for the total prohibition of the use of chemical weapons and a basic undertaking

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

on the total destruction of existing stockpiles as well as their production facilities have indeed eliminated a major stumbling block. There is still, however, the question of how to put into practical terms this basic understanding, as well as other crucial issues to be resolved.

Concurrently, we should also acknowledge that the interests of developing and non-possessor countries should not be undermined just for the sake of early completion of the convention. Furthermore, the question of verification of non-production in the chemical industry should not place unnecessary burdens on civilian chemical industries, particularly those in developing countries. In this regard, it is important to ensure that the relevant provisions of the future convention be implemented in such a way as to avoid possible abuses motivated by commercial interests. By the same token, we continue to believe that the inclusion of provisions dealing with economic and technical development, as well as on assistance and protection, will give a strong incentive for States to join the convention.

The world-wide aversion to nuclear weapons is also manifest in the continuing interest in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In our part of the world this is exemplified by the ongoing efforts of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) for a such a zone in South-East Asia. The improved security climate, in both the global and the regional spheres, should facilitate the early realization of this objective, which would contribute significantly to the strengthening of non-proliferation by progressively reducing the areas within which nuclear weapons can operate.

With regard to naval armaments, it is undeniable that no less than one third of the world's nuclear arsenals are destined for naval deployment, while the distinguishing feature of sea-based nuclear forces is their ability to

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proliferate geographically throughout the world and to be deployed at any coastal point. While the stationing and movement of tactical nuclear weapons on land are restricted by explicit treaty provisions, their naval deployment can place any State at risk.

As an archipelagic country located astride important waterways that link two oceans and two continents, Indonesia cannot but view with the utmost concern the horizontal and vertical proliferation of sea-based strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. It is therefure essential to define certain principles and establish guidelines on measures for naval-arms limitation and disarmament.

The changing patterns of relationships among States, and especially the major Powers, will inevitably lead to a new global-security environment no longer anchored in bipolarism, and they will sooner or later also make their impact on the security configurations in the Asia-Pacific region. It is therefore essential to begin laying the foundations for secure and stable relations and to prepare for a new strategic setting in our region.

In Indonesia's view, in a region as vast and complex as the Asia-Pacific region, concrete measures need to be taken that have a direct bearing on the prospects for peace and security.

First is the prevention of potential conflict situations in such areas as the South China Sea. There is a growing concern that the intricate territorial and sovereignty disputes could ignite, rendering that area a new regional flash-point. The South China Sea is a semi-enclosed sea linking the Pacific and Indian Oceans and located between continental Asia and insular South-East Asia, and its strategic and economic importance is therefore beyond question. It is also bordered by a number of littoral and hinterland States

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with a long history of endemic conflicts and recurrent intervention by external Powers. The situation threatens to be further exacerbated by unresolved questions pertaining to the delimitation of territorial seas, continental shelves and exclusive economic zones.

It is therefore imperative to transform these potential sources of conflict into constructive cooperation for mutual benefit. The States of South-East Asia bordering the South China Sea share an abiding interest in fostering peace, stability and cooperation. This should provide an impetus for regional endeavors to manage the potentials offered by the South China Sea and to undertake discussions on a wide range of issues for possible cooperation, including scientific research, environmental protection and marine fishery. For by expanding such cooperation in agreed areas a more conducive atmosphere can be created not only to extend regional cooperation in the area but also ultimately to achieve a new maritime order.

Secondly, the introduction of selective confidence-building measures in the vast geographical extent of the Asia-Pacific is, in our view, both timely and appropriate. These include, inter alia, transparency in military arrangements; the restructuring of forces towards more defensive postures to help reduce military tensions; an agreed ceiling on military forces of external Powers through exchange of data; and a reduction in the number of military exercises while allowing representatives of other countries to be present as observers. Further, it would be in the interests of the countries in the region to forswear the acquisition of nuclear weapons and chemical weapons, as well as other advanced weapons systems and military technologies. Since States in this vast expanse share maritime boundaries, it is particularly important to initiate steps for such naval confidence-building

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measures as a reduction or a freeze in naval forces; security guarantees for sea-lanes, particularly through straits; a multilateral incidents-at-sea régime; and limitations on and prior notification of naval exercises, as well as assistance to coastal States in maritime surveillance, safety and pollution control. My delegation remains convinced that the adoption and implementation of these far-reaching measures would foster regional cohesion and strengthen confidence-building processes at both the global and the regional levels.

Thirdly, in the context of the prospective changes in the security equation in the Asia-Pacific region, Indonesia believes that ASEAN's approach, as reflected in the proposed zone of peace, freedom and neutrality - ZOPFAN as it is now known from its acronym - continues to be of central validity and relevance. It represents ASEAN's blueprint for a new framework for peace and cooperation, a new structure of cooperative relationships within which to ensure greater stability and security in our part of the world. I should add that it is a flexible blueprint open to adjustments in light of the rapidly evolving global and regional environment. It endeavours to address the increasingly complex geopolitical and strategic environment of the Asia-Pacific region while taking into account the immense diversity in various spheres among the countries of the region.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

In essence, the concept of this zone of peace, friendship and neutrality poses the need for a commonly agreed posture of greater mutual restraint by the countries of South-East Asia as well as by non-regional Powers. And it contains suggested policy guidelines and adjustments whose implementation would promote regional endeavours to resolve existing or potential conflict situations in a spirit of common responsibility and amity. As for the major Powers, it will require a commensurate change in their basic interests vis-à-vis the countries of the region and a conscious adjustment of their security doctrines and strategies. My delegation firmly believes that, in the light of the imminent settlement of the Cambodian conflict and the rapid transformation of the global and regional landscape, the realization of the zone of peace, friendship and neturality has assumed added urgency.

Arms transfers have long played a critical role in global political-military matters. The non-aligned countries have repeatedly pointed out that the build-up of conventional armaments represents a tragic misuse of resources in a world afflicted by poverty and hunger. General Assembly resolution 43/75 I finally opened the way for multilateral action to restrain international arms transfers. There is indeed a need to take a collective look at this problem in all its aspects and focus on ways and means by which an international consensus can be reached.

In this regard, my delegation has noted the important proposal for a register of transfers of armaments. The need to curb the development, production and transfer of conventional armaments is all too evident given the world-wide prevalence of conventional armaments and the mounting expenditures involved. It should be emphasized, however, that the accumulation and

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qualitative refinement of conventional arms are being pursued by the same States that also acquire and sell the largest share of these armaments. Neither can it be contended that conventional armaments per se pose a greater threat to the survival of mankind than nuclear weapons, or that conventional arms in the possession of developing nations in some way pose a greater threat to international peace and security than the nuclear arsenals and conventional weapons of the major Powers. The proposal for a register should be considered in the light of these realities; it should focus on both supplier and recipient countries and should be directed towards the primary causes of the conventional arms race.

I would like to conclude on an optimistic note concerning the disarmament endeavours here in the First Committee. We all agree that the climate for considering the multitude of issues has greatly improved. There is certainly greater willingness and understanding among us, resulting in mutual concessions and compromises. Such a trend is fully reflected especially in the adoption of fewer draft resolutions - an increasing number of them by consensus - and successful mergers of identical resolutions. Our debates have become more purposeful, constantly seeking wider areas of agreement. In that light, my delegation remains confident that we can make a constructive contribution towards attaining the goals of nuclear and conventional disarmament. With those objectives in view, we pledge our active participation and continuing support.

Mr. MARKU (Albania): On behalf of the Albanian delegation, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am sure that under your chairmanship, and with the cooperation

(Mr. Marku, Albania)

of the other members of the Bureau, the deliberations of this session of the First Committee will be a sucess.

This year, the First Committee meets in special international circumstances. As a result of profound political changes in the world, the foundations of a new system of international security and cooperation have been laid. A fundamental part of that system is disarmament, which is a challenge that can be coped with.

Recent developments are indicative of the importance of joint initiatives to build a world free from fear of destruction. The idea that the prosperity of the world depends to a considerable extent on the absence of factors threatening it is constantly gaining ground. That growing awareness is being embodied in the efforts of the international community to create such an environment, where all countries and peoples can work in peace to build their own future and where mutual relations of security and cooperation have acquired an entirely new content.

As a small country which makes a modest contribution to international life, the Republic of Albania supports all the steps that have been and are being taken to achieve international peace and security and stands for a more active role for the United Nations in that regard. It upholds the view that the new measures in the field of disarmament should be backed up with concrete action to prevent the build-up of conventional-weapons arsenals beyond necessary national-defence limits; this should constitute the essence of the military doctrine of every State. The reduction of conventional forces and the establishment of the necessary monitoring régime would lead to greater political and military stability in Europe.

(Mr. Marku, Albania)

As a country participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Albania attaches special importance to security- and confidence-building measures in relations among States as well. Confidence-building in relations among States is a prerequisite for negotiations leading to the elimination of the factors that pose a threat to international peace and security. In that context, Albania has hailed the progress made in the field of security- and confidence-building measures as stipulated in the Vienna document, and considers adherence to them as an important step towards strengthening stability in Europe.

Albania firmly supports the United States initiative for a unilateral reduction of its nuclear arsenal announced by President Bush on 27 September. Albania also welcomes the positive response by the Soviet Union for a further cut on its nuclear arsenal. In its statement issued on that ocassion, the Albanian Government underlined that

> "it considers these important initiatives as major steps towards disarmament and peace and wishes to see them applied in practice as soon as possible. These initiatives, taken at a time of great transformations in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe towards democracy and the establishment of market economy, constitute an important and historic step which responds most positively to those transformations and to the interests of the peoples of Europe and the world."

Albania welcomes the talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on these issues as well as their commitment to all other issues related to international peace and security.

(Mr. Marku, Albania)

The recent steps taken in the field of disarmament have created a new climate in international relations. In line with this new spirit, all efforts should now be concentrated on the control of nuclear proliferation and on the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons as well as of their delivery vehicles. Nuclear disarmament must be supported by an effective régime of nuclear non-proliferation the specific elements of which should be further strengthened.

At present the international community is also confronted with the issue of reducing military expenditures. Of course, military expenditure can be cut down considerably in conjunction with the steps under way to reduce nuclear and conventional forces. The huge sums that many countries can save in so doing can be used to solve difficult economic problems and meet pressing social needs in those or other countries.

(Mr. Marku, Albania)

Prohibiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is an important part of the disarmament process. Real progress towards an end to their proliferation would begin with a total ban on any test of such weapons. For this purpose it is necessary further to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty through the participation of all countries Parties to it. It stands to reason that the issue will be settled if the great Powers work together with the importing countries to achieve a ban on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In addition, a total test ban would pave the way for an effective prohibition of nuclear-weapons proliferation and facilitate the efforts to put an end to the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons, thereby raising hopes for the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Of course, the problems are difficult, but hopes are also great, provided all countries unite to reach a solution which is acceptable and beneficial to each and every country.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.